

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended): A wafer carrier for supporting a substrate, comprising:

a circular plate having a flat edge region extending around the circumference of said plate, said flat edge region having a width of approximately 5 to 25 mm; and

a circular recessed center region having a recessed bottom surface and including an upwardly inclined surface around the periphery of said recessed bottom surface,

wherein the substrate is supported by a portion of the upwardly inclined surface and is spaced apart from said recessed bottom surface, and the upwardly inclined surface is inclined at an angle in the range of approximately 5 to 45 degrees to the plane of the recessed bottom surface such that the substrate is supported by said wafer carrier only around a peripheral edge of the substrate and a backside of the substrate does not contact the recessed bottom surface, and

[wherein] said wafer carrier is [comprised substantially] made of a material consisting essentially of [selected from the group of] silicon carbide, aluminum nitride, large-grained polycrystalline silicon [and] or silicon/silicon carbide alloy which enables the upwardly inclined surface to maintain [continuous] contact substantially entirely around the peripheral edge of the substrate during processing at elevated temperatures such that deposition on the backside of the substrate is substantially prevented.

Claim 2 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said recessed bottom surface further comprises at least one aperture formed therein for receiving at least one support member to engage the substrate.

Claim 3 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said circular recessed center region has a diameter of approximately 200 mm.

Claim 4 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said circular recessed center region has a diameter of approximately 300 mm.

Claim 5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said upwardly inclined surface is inclined at an angle of approximately 10° to the plane of the bottom recessed surface.

Claim 7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein said wafer carrier is comprised of a material having thermal conductivity in the range of 40 to 70 W/m/K.

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein the wafer is spaced apart from said recessed bottom surface by a distance of approximately 0.15 to 0.5 mm.

Claim 11 (original): The wafer carrier of Claim 1 wherein the wafer is spaced apart from said recessed bottom surface by a distance of approximately 0.25 mm.

Claim 12 (canceled)

Please cancel claims 13 to 23

Claims 13-23 (canceled)

Claims 24-28 (canceled)